1: Tew E-4 (no date) 1950 FT7 Yao FT7

and £30 per annum. It is profitable to carry fresh fish inland by bicycle even as far as Blantyre,[1] as the shore price to the retailer is 4*s.* a load, which later may fetch from 16*s.* to 24*s.*[2] Yao on the south-west lake shore grow an excellent quality rice.[3] Rice is also grown near Lake Chilwa, but is mainly sold in the market organized near the lake shore by the Agricultural Department.

Division of Labour

The man builds the house, hunts, fishes, makes the nets, baskets, grain-store, game-traps, and, in the old days, the bark-cloth. He cultivates the tobacco. He cuts down the trees and may help with the hoeing and harvesting. The woman hoes, muds the floor of the hut, sweeps, cooks, brings firewood, draws water, brews beer, makes the pots and pipes.[4]

Land Usage

There are two types of garden in the Yao areas south of Lake Nyasa: one the ordinary garden in which the staples grow, and second, gardens along the stream beds. These latter are especially valuable for providing out-of-season crops. In addition most householders have a few small plots for tobacco and ground-nuts.

The main garden is cultivated by the slash-and-burn method, common in Central Africa. The Yao, unlike the Bemba, garden occupies the whole area cleared. Burning is done just before the rainy season (October–November). The ash and soil are hoed into elongated mounds and grain is planted along the ridges. Gardens may be cultivated for more than five years. In the second and subsequent years of cultivation the stalks and weeds are piled up and burnt. There are signs of soil impoverishment. The gardens are cleared in August, and heaped to dry for burning. After the burning the seeds are planted in late November. By February and March green maize is available to supplement the diet, and by the end of April the crops are ready to be harvested. The maize is stored in wicker containers, while sorghum is stored in the huts on a stand. Cassava is planted in large mounds made by turning the turfs over, so that the roots are outside the mound and the vegetable matter inside. Legumes are planted in smaller gardens, or interplanted with the main crop. Ground-nuts are stored, after being shelled, in mud-plastered wicker containers, designed to be rat-proof. Tobacco is planted at the sides of the streams for hand-watering in the seedling stage, and then transplanted about January. The leaves are ready to be plucked about April and soon afterwards they are marketed. Sweet potatoes are planted in the rainy season, and are ready for eating in May. The stream gardens yield out-of-season crops—maize, beans, pumpkins, and also sugar-cane, which is used in the initiation ceremonies.

Craftsmanship

The Yao have few skills. All cultivation is by hoe; axes and knives are their only other technological equipment. The men make mats from reeds and palm leaf, and the women make pottery. The huts are strongly built from poles laced with bamboo and plastered with mud. The roof is thatched with grass. Under Arab influence the

[1] *Census of Native Population*, 1931, p. 16.
[2] Codrington, 1898, p. 317.
[3] Swynnerton, c. 1902, p. 236; Macdonald, 1882, vol. i, p. 137.
[4] Aplin, 1931, p. 19.

3: Stanmer D-5 (ca. 1912) 1922 FT7 Yao FT7

539 "*Lakola lakola kanda ka*"
"Picking up picking up a little basket full"

to which the listeners exclaim

"*Lakolaa!*"
"Overflows!"

At the completion of each sentence in the story, one of his listeners will exclaim, "Go!" When he has finished his story, he says,

"*Ajakala katala katalawanga panitse palawaye, unku akipanji!*"
"Take all the fire, the little mouse lost it in sleep, by the hand it is very hard, the hair (is) in a lump!"

During the intervals of a long story, one of the listeners may break in and sing some little song, such as the song of the mbondo in the story of the greedy man, thus giving the story-teller a rest.

342 **The house and household utensils.** The Yao house does not differ greatly from the Nyanja habitation which I have already described elsewhere.[1] The accompanying figure (Pl. XIV, fig. 13) gives the circular plan of a hut with a veranda partly open and partly enclosed to form a room. The central pole of the hut is indicated, the hearth (H), the position of the sleeping mats (M), and the place where the water pots are kept (P). The 352 bed may be a bamboo platform supported by forked sticks a foot above the ground (*mampasi*), or a dais of mud, over which is spread the sleeping-mat, *upasa*. (Pl. XIV, fig. 14.) Seats, *chilenga*, are made of legs of wood with conveniently placed branches acting as legs. I have seen a symmetrically curved leg with shaped legs all in one piece, which suggested by its form and by the presence of a button on the midline of the under surface that it was made in the imitation of an animal. Plank seats with peg legs are now sometimes seen. Wooden pegs are driven into the wall and serve to hang odd articles upon.

[359] The hearth is simply a shallow depression in the mud floor, around which are placed three large stones to support the cooking pots. Sometimes a canopy is built over the hearth, consisting of four upright poles supporting a platform made of reeds and grass, upon which millet and other seed grains are often stored. From this platform *kipulo* (*mwejo*, Chin.), the gourd containing the supply of salt is often hung. The seed grain tied up in [357] little bundles is suspended from the *kipulo* where it becomes very dry and smoked, without any ill effect to the next year's crop. (Pl. XIV, fig. 16.) Four pronged branches of trees are often stuck in the ground with a string tied around the prongs, and used as holders for gourds, salt bottles, etc.; this device is called *kipanda* (*pkanda*, Chin.). (Pl. XIV, fig. 10.) 415 The smaller utensils include the porridge stirring stick *mkiko* (Yao and Chin.) (Pl. XIV, fig. 12),' several wooden spoons *chikwai* (*chipanda* or *nanuiwa*, Chin.), (Pl. XIV, figs. 11, 18), a number of gourds of various shapes and sizes used as ladles and drinking vessels,

[1] 'Notes on some tribes of British Central Africa,' op. cit., p. 830-833.

4: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1909) 1910 FT7 Yao FT7
Marovi FR4

Gago, the residue after pounding maize, is eaten by the women. No oils are used in cooking, but of fat and suet any native is very fond. Meat may be dried and smoked if in large quantity: flesh, fish and fowl is commonly roasted on spits; small pieces of chicken may be made into a kind of stew with beans and eaten as the relish. When on a journey the fire is commonly made against a tree. The cooking vessels are cleaned before use, not after. The fried fish eaten is often partly decomposed, and meat which is very high, even with maggots, is cooked and eaten, maggots and all.

Taboo.—Bushbuck is not eaten by many natives, as they say it feeds near graveyards. Fowls are not eaten by some, as this diet causes them to vomit; a snake-catcher never eats vegetables, and at the same time puts medicine on his hands. Many abstain from the flesh of certain animals as certain skin diseases are said to be caused thereby; all such diseases bear the name *vulwavanga*.

A man who loses a relation by drowning takes an oath that he will never again eat fish, and never drink water from such lake, river, etc. Here the idea is of course simply to avoid eating part of the relation.

A Nyanja and Machinga will not eat the flesh of the hippopotamus, because on the body they say there are the marks of a string round the loins and of a mat on his back, adding that long ago he was a man. Animals of prey would never under any circumstances be eaten. Milk used never to be drunk by an adult, as it was said to cause a man to become as a child. A man would not dare to drink woman's milk as it was said he would surely die of dysentery.

Tobacco, etc.—The smoking of tobacco was a custom introduced from the coast. Chewing was general among Machinga and Yao men and women, while the Angoni and Mafanja snuffed. With the tobacco a little lime, made by burning shells, was taken in the mouth. Giddiness and sleepy sensations were experienced after chewing. The Nyasa and Awisa smoke a hubble-bubble, the water vessel being a large sausage-shaped gourd with a reed stem supporting a large bowl of mbalwa wood, sometimes very nicely carved (Plate XXVII, Figs. 5 and 7). The Amyanja smokes a pipe with the bowl made of clay and the stem of bamboo (Plate XXVII, Fig. 6); these are made by the women. Tobacco is grown in nearly every village, a large-leaved rather coarse variety; it is sun-dried and rolled up into hollow rings 6 inches in diameter and 3 inches broad. For snuff (*Fodia womanna*) the sun-dried tobacco is further dried over a fire on a pan, when cold it is ground on a stone with a smaller stone by the women, and with it is mixed some ashes of the *nyasa* fig-tree.

At Blantyre I obtained a water-pipe made of bamboo stem; this was the water reservoir; a stem of reed supports a little clay bowl. The mouth is placed over the upper end of the bamboo. Bhang (*cannabis indica*) is smoked in a pipe of this kind.

AGRICULTURE.

The people live by cultivating the soil. Both sexes help in hoeing and planting, the collecting of the crops being mostly done by women. The hoe is the

4: Stanmus D-5 (ca. 1909)1910 FT7 Yao FT7
Maravi FR4
Ngoni FR6

M Y 241 only implement used. Sowing is done after the first rains, about November; the harvest takes place in May to July. Gardens are at varying distances from the villages, depending partly on the soil becoming exhausted after years of cultivation. Boundaries are marked by leaving a line of uncultivated ground, sowing a line of a different crop, tying knots in the young crops at intervals, ditches, etc. In [922] starting a new garden, woodland is often taken; the trees are cut down, leaving stumps 3 feet high; the undergrowth is cleared away and burnt, the ashes distributed over the land, which is then hoed, really very superficially; the earth is then made up into little heaps with a central hole in each, after the first rains four or five grains of the cereal (maize, millet) are dropped in each and covered with earth; as the young shoots grow the hole is more and more filled in.

FIG. 8.

With the cereal is planted the seed of peas, beans, pumpkins, the former on coming up then grow up the maize stalks. The seed is last year's product and not specially selected.

M Y [343] [917] Depredations among crops made by elephant, hippopotamus, large antelope (eland and kudu), pigs and baboons, vary in extent in different districts. Little grass huts are built, raised above the ground like a pile-dwelling, in which watchers are stationed. Fences, sometimes extending for miles, are built. The gardens of the chief are hoed by his slaves or the people of the village. Maize is collected M [251] in the cob, and after the outer coverings have been removed is stored; so is the *nkadzu*, millet in the head; beans and peas are stored in baskets. Medicine is put on the ground to ensure a good crop, and a piece of stick is sometimes hung up for good luck.

Cattle, etc.

N 231 [922] The keeping of cattle is practically restricted to certain tribes living in districts free from tsetse-fly (Angoni, Wankonde); among these people wealth is reckoned by cattle. The milk is little used; the flesh is eaten only when an animal dies. Marks of ownership are made by cutting the ears (Fig. 8). Cattle are kept in open kraals by Angoni, in a compartment of their houses by Wankonde; they are tended by the small boys as a rule. Goats and sheep are kept all over the country. Castration of cattle is a recognised practice (*kufula*).

N 281 Angoni make their shields from cattle skins; their spear handles are covered with goat hair (beard); hair anklets and armlets in dancing costume are made from goat hair. Skins are used as dress to a small extent.

Hunting.

M 224 A man intimates to the community around that he is making a hunt by clothing a boy of about ten years in leaves, who precedes him and the men from his own village through adjacent villages; at each village the lad has to lie down and